

**Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius**

**SECOND SERIES**

***The Black International*    *No. 17***

**How the Faith Is  
Protected**

**THE UNIQUE APPARATUS OF THE BLACK INTERNATIONAL  
TO SECURE LOYALTY**

***by Joseph McCabe***

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# How The Faith Is Protected

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TO SECURE LOYALTY

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## Chapter I

### DEATH AND DAMNATION FOR THE UNBELIEVER

In 1928 Bertrand Russell said in the course of an address to the British Rationalist Press Association that "in fifty years the Roman Catholic Church will dominate America." For once I fail to follow the reasoning of the distinguished mathematician. If we take the estimate of the number of their members which the clergy supply to the public authorities we find that in 1900 they claimed to be 15.7 of the entire population, in 1910 they had sunk to 14.1, in 1920 they claimed to be 16.9, in 1930 16.2, and in 1940, according to the figures supplied to the Federal Council of the Churches, 15.9. Instead of a stately and convincing growth toward the necessary 60 or 70 percent, much less an abnormally rapid growth, we have here a curve of progress that gets back to its starting-point in nearly half a century. It is not necessary to add that until 1930 the growth of population was entirely different from that in the other countries, for from 1900 until that date there were about 17,000,000 immigrants, and more than half of these were Catholics: a fact strangely overlooked by all writers who are moved to make profound observations when they see the decennial increases of the Catholic population.

On the other hand even many Americans will not know that not only has the flood of immigration subsided to a modest stream but there is evidence, which is accepted by Catholic authorities, that the Catholic birth rate is being deliberately checked by parents. About 80 percent of Catholics live in cities or towns, and in even the most Catholic of these there has been a notable drop of the birth rate. From 1920 to 1938 it sank in the towns and cities of Massachusetts, where Catholics are strongest, from 23.7 to 13.8. In New York City it fell from 23.4 to 14.4. Commenting on these figures the Catholic Commonweal said:

The urban Irish have long since stopped even reproducing themselves, and the urban Italians and Slavs are rapidly following their example.

From the temperate language of the Catholic writer you would not suspect that his Church puts the use of contraceptives on much the same level as murder but, of course, he is distracting attention from an obvious inference. It is one more proof, like that I gave in the last book, of a serious defection from the Church. However, what we have to note here is that the Catholic body as estimated by the authorities is losing its treasured advantage of a full birth rate as well as the advantage of immigration. If we further recall that they claim only about 20,000 to 25,000 converts a year we feel that even Catholic arithmetic will be severely strained to show the faintest glimmer of hope of ever becoming the majority.



But we have already seen the worthlessness of these Catholic statistics. A common-sense appreciation of the evidence puts the number of real Catholics in America at about 9,000,000 in 1900 and about 15,000,000 today. The general population has increased by nearly 80 percent: the Catholic population, in spite of all its peculiarities, by less than 70 percent. The only "miracle" of Catholic growth is that it is really a growth downward.

But after all, you will say, the fact that the Church gets 15,000,000 Americans to subscribe to such a creed as I described in the last book requires some explanation. Indeed, they seem not simply to subscribe to it but, according to the apologists and the Catholic press, to be more enthusiastic about their "holy faith" than the members of any other civilized religion; except, significantly enough, the semi-civilized Moslem fanatics who break each other's polls in the Near East or the corresponding fanatics in India. They take, we are told, such pride in it as a little girl does in her first doll: they quite solemnly say that they have a right to demand tolerance for themselves and refuse it to others: and they swallow the excuses of the Black International for its support of the vilest characters as smoothly as we swallow oysters. Yet beyond any question the creed is as I stated it. The Catholic who questions a single one of the dogmas, literally interpreted, not only incurs hell but plainly questions the very foundations of Church authority; and the Canon Law lays it down that the Catholic incurs this sentence if he confines his "liberalism" within his own mind.

Yet again the miracle quickly loses its glamor when you examine it closely. Of 15,000,000 people in the United States one-third are under the age of 16, and you will not ask me to study their beliefs. Indeed, with due acknowledgement of that respect for youth which we old folk are learning I doubt if the beliefs of youths and girls under 20 matter very much, and that means nearly a half of them. To be quite blunt about it, in fact, I see nothing to boast about in the belief of the majority of the remainder. Can you speak of beliefs or merely practices? The religious life of a good half of them consists in dodging the devil by going to Church once a week for half an hour and faintly hearing a priest in the far distance mumble prayers in cataractic Latin. The ease with which such folk were swept away from the Church in millions in Europe and South America as long as there was freedom of discussion shows what shallow and feeble roots their faith has.

Let us try to get a realistic view of the Catholic Church in America instead of repeating all this frothy nonsense, which seems to impress politicians, about 20,000,000 devout and enthusiastic Catholics who put their faith above everything. Of the forty to fifty million Catholic immigrants and their descendants the Church, with its vast organization of priests, schools, newspapers, radio, etc., and its colossal wealth has managed to retain within its fold some 5,000,000 children, 5,000,000 folk who are under 20 or are on so poor a cultural level that we are not interested in their beliefs, and 5,000,000 men and women of sufficient education (often only primary) and intelligence to suggest that they hold their beliefs deliberately.

We are not here concerned with the angle of the politician.



who counts votes, or the newspaper-proprietor, who counts dollars. or the professor or writer, who counts readers. We are just trying to understand how the Black International can maintain its baleful activity in the 20th Century, and it is most instructive to study its basis in America. This that I have described is its basis. All talk about 20,000,000 Catholics who are the spiritual cream of the country is bunk; and all talk about a triumphant progress that promises to "make America Catholic" is double-distilled bunk. And, as I have shown, the Roman Church is in modern times in the same not very impressive condition in every country except where the Black International has won back, by a combination of national treachery and vile association with corrupt powers, its old power of coercion.

There is, therefore, not even a fascinating problem of psychology in the survival of this medieval faith, as some imagine. Sociologists and social psychologists, in fact, become politicians when they notice "the venerable Church." It is a massive fact in the social fabric, but they do not care to look too closely into it. They suspect it may be as dirty and unhealthy, if you go too close, as one of those thatched cottages in an old English village which look so "cute" to the American who passes in an automobile. We are not here examining the survival of the Roman faith in the 20th Century, or inquiring how grown-up and often educated men and women can be induced to call it a "holy faith" and a beautiful system, from any psychological interest. We are verifying our suspicion that the faith is protected by just the same trickery, deceit, and coercion as the Axis powers used in working their way into a formidable position, and therefore the alliance, which seems impossible or improbable to those who prefer to admire the Roman Church from a distance, is entirely natural and was inevitable once the reaction against democracy began.

There was in every age a core of believers, of a particular temperament, who did not need any action of the Black International to bind them to the Church and who in very large part were of high character; though their chastity was apt to be tinged with intolerance and inhumanity and their charity associated with a sour fanaticism. It is waste of time for writers to remind us of these "many good men and women." It is the institution and its methods, the general situation, that matters. And I have amply shown that ever since the first "great Pope," Leo I (440-61), began to use forgery in the interest of the Church and to burn heretics, deception and violence were the weapons on which it relied rather than upon argument. It is enough here to recall four critical stages in the history of the Church. When in the 11th and 12th centuries it was alarmed by the reawakening of the minds of Europe it retorted with the Inquisition. When Protestantism broke its power in the 16th Century it tried to drown it in blood in the Thirty Years War. When the European powers conquered the French revolutionary spirit and Napoleonic liberalism in the 19th Century the Church allied itself intimately with the most corrupt of them in a murderous attack on freedom and democracy. And when in our own time America, Britain, and France in a narrow and discreditable view of their own interests permitted new and popular anti-democratic forces to gather strength, the Church at once entered into alliance with them.



This policy of violence is, I showed, actually the law of the Roman Church. While American apologists were falsely stating that the wicked historians of the last century—the Catholic Lord Acton used the strongest language of them all—lied about the Church, and that in any case it now abhors coercion and is all sweetness and light, the Vatican press was issuing one edition after another of Canon Law in which it is quite indignantly affirmed, against “liberal” Catholics, that the Church has never abdicated its “right of the sword”: which, they explained, includes lesser matters like torture or any physical sufferings or material inflictions (prison, fines, exile, confiscation, etc.). I gave the words of the exact references to Marianus de Luca and Cardinal Lepicier. The former was professor of Canon Law in the Papal University, the latter in a Papal college at Rome, and both had the Pope’s stamp of approval on their books. Indeed, I see by the title page of De Luca’s book, which is quite savage in its long arguments for the Church’s right to kill or maim heretics, that it was published in Rome, Ratisbon, and “Neo-Eboracum.” As the latter is the Latin for New York it seems that this truculent statement of Church Law was simultaneously published, privately, in America for the clergy, and we may be sure that it has an honored place in those seminary or college-libraries in which apologists now pen their assurances to the American public that the Church is the mother of toleration and the soul of charity.

Professor C. J. Cadoux has an interesting chapter on this aspect of Romanism (**Roman Catholicism and Freedom**, 1936, ch I). He sums up its long history in the words of Prof. Lecky: “The Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind” (**The Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe**, II, 32). Lecky is so often quoted by Catholics for his (unjust) compliments to the early Roman Church that this is a hard saying. However, it is the modern development that is particularly interesting. In 1832, when just such a clerical-fascist tyranny ruled Europe as does today, Gregory XVI said in an Encyclical: “Out of this most foul fountain of indifferentism flows that absurd and erroneous opinion or rather raving that liberty of conscience ought to be asserted and secured for everybody.” Catholics were at that time a negligible minority in England and were enthusiastic for religious toleration, but in the forties the Irish famine drove crowds of them to Britain, and the Church became so optimistic that it forgot the mask sometimes. In 1855 a writer in the Catholic **Rambler** (p. 178) attacked “the impious and absurd theory of religious liberty” and, answering the question what the Catholic would do if he ever got the majority in England, he said: “If it would benefit the cause of Catholicism he would tolerate you, but if expedient he would imprison you, banish you, fine you, and possibly he might even hang you.”

Notice the date, 1885. The revolutionary wave of 1848 had spent itself and under the blood-splotted banners of the reactionary monarchs the Church was again speaking candidly. In that year the Pope issued his famous Syllabus, and amongst the “wicked opinions” which he required Catholics all over the world to regard as “reprobated, proscribed, and condemned” were several such as the following (literally translated from the Latin Syllabus):



15. Every man is free to embrace and profess that religion which he finds true in the light of human reason.

17. At least there is hope of the eternal salvation of men who do not belong to the true Church of Christ.

80. The Roman Pontiff can and ought to be reconciled with progress, liberalism, and modern civilization.

And as late as 1864 in the Encyclical *Quanta Cura* he denounced this modern fad of "liberty of conscience" as a "liberty of perdition."

But alas for the Papal Canute. The waves were already fretting round his feet, and in a few more years he lost the Temporal Power and saw the world coldly indifferent to, or jubilant over, the defeat of the Church. Democracy, free general education, and a demand for increasing liberty spread over Europe and Latin America. The age of that "accommodation with modern civilization" which Pius IX had contemptuously rejected set in. There was now no country in the world in which the Church could exercise the power which it claimed. Even in Spain rebels against the Church, who swarmed in the cities and the universities, could not be touched unless they were so advanced in their political views that they could be branded "Anarchists," just as they are now branded Communists or Bolsheviks. Many hundreds were treated thus, and the American and British press lightly dismissed the murders and tortures as an unpleasant necessity forced upon these Spanish gentlemen by Anarchist bomb-throwers. It happened that I was in close touch with one of these "Anarchists," Francisco Ferrer, an idealist who loathed violence and politics and who was judicially murdered solely to oblige the Church. I raised a stink in the whole English-speaking world and got the fact generally recognized, but I could not convince the public that Ferrer was only one of hundreds of victims of the Spanish Church, and that foul tortures were used on them in the jails from 1890 to 1910. The Black International in all countries lied and used its power over the press to conceal the fact that, where it thought it could safely do so, the Church still exercised its right to maim or kill rebels against itself. It no longer dressed them in a white sheet. It stuck a red flag in their hands.

In all the rest of the world except Spain it professed to be "reconciled with progress, liberalism, and modern civilization," in the words it had solemnly denounced a few decades earlier. Then there opened the appalling new chapter in the history of civilization. The high priests of reaction at Rome began to hear voices which they thought had been stilled for ever. France, needing the political influence of the Church, treated it with a new respect and granted it unexpected privileges and the Church in France abandoned the hypocritical language of compromise. The Jesuit Cardinal Billot, its head, wrote and published a Latin *Tractatus de Ecclesia Christi* (1922) and the Jesuit Professor Sortain a *Traite de Philosophie* (1924) in which the clergy were candidly told that Rome still had the right to use physical measures including the death-sentence, against heretics. In Italy Mussolini began to deride liberty and liberalism in the language of Pius IX and, after years of hard bargaining, the clergy clasped the red hand he held out to them. A new Latin edition of the Canon Law was issued, and



the Pope in 1929 boldly and emphatically asserted its claims for all the world to hear (in the letter to Gasparri which I quoted at length in an earlier booklet). The Japs were the next to enter into alliance with the resuscitated medieval Church, and then Hitler. . . .

We have seen the story. But the Black International in America continued to dupe the public and forbid the press to publish the worst of the news—like the Gasparri letter, the approach to the Japs, and the deal with Hitler—that came from Europe. At the very time when the Vatican was negotiating with Mussolini to sell its assistance in crushing religious liberty in Italy the Calvert Associates, the weightiest propagandist body of the Roman Church in America, issued its **Calvert Handbook of Catholic Facts**, using the names of the President (Coolidge) and several heads of professors of American universities as "sponsors." In this, while the Vatican was driving a hard bargain for the suppression of the liberties of non-Catholics in Italy, they audaciously reproduced, as frontispiece, the letter in which Washington rejoices that "in this land the light of truth and reason has triumphed over the power of bigotry and superstition, and that every person may here worship God according to the dictates of his own heart." Even Leo XIII. we saw, had ridiculed that sentiment. And in the text of the book these Calvert Associates, sheltering under the patronage of leaders of American culture and business, assured the public that the charge that the Church had used violence was based upon lies and misrepresentation and that it is in principle in favor of the American rule of religious liberty for all.

People had already forgotten in America, and the press was careful not to recall, something that had created a mild sensation in 1910. President Roosevelt told the ambassador at Rome that he was going to visit the king of Italy and would like a visit to the Pope also arranged. The Vatican replied that it would welcome the visit "if nothing like the recent Fairbanks incident arose to prevent it." Vice-President Fairbanks had committed the "unspeakable outrage on the common father of Christendom" (as the Jesuit paper *America* called it) of calling at the Methodist Mission in Rome after visiting the Pope! So Roosevelt was not to visit the king of Italy if he wanted to see the Pope. Roosevelt promptly and vigorously withdrew his proposal to call at the Vatican. A few years later he entertained me at a lunch of honor at the Harvard Club. If it were wildly conceivable that the President Roosevelt of today were to confer some such honor on me, I wonder what the Catholic, or even the ordinary, press would say.

It illustrates what one would almost call the stranglehold that the Church has secured in America since 1918, and one use to which it puts this is a complete deception of the public in regard to the Church Law on tolerance and coercion. The irony is that its position is based entirely upon the unique beauty and efficacy of the creed I described in the last book. This is so precious to men that the Church must guard them against losing it by burning aggressive heretics at the stake and claiming the right to inflict any sort of material penalty on men who are even "suspected of heresy." Msgr. Ryan, the American Church's arch-apologist, thinks it prudent never to discuss the monstrous claims of the Latin Canon Law but in



one amazing passage he gives away the principle. In *The State and the Church* he says:

The fact that the individual may in good faith think that his false religion is true gives no more right to propagandize it than the sincerity of the alien anarchist entitles him to advocate his abominable political theories in the United States . . . Error has not the same rights as truth. Since the profession and practice of the erring are contrary to human welfare how can error have rights?

And the man who writes this mush of priestly arrogance, cunning appeal to prejudice, and bad logic is treated in Washington as part of the cream of the national life. Does he mean that it must be left to the Catholic to say what is absolutely true and what is absolutely false? No. He obviously means that the medieval hash of hell and devils, of Jesus Christ in the vest pocket and little children suffering torture for all eternity, of blatant forgeries and transparently fabricated doctrines, which I described in the last book is so self-evidently true that all other religions or philosophies of life must be suppressed; and his Canon Law argues from the same principle that the Church has the right and the duty to kill, maim, torture, or ruin any who attempt to spread them. In the same book Ryan assures you that his Church is not one in perfect harmony with but actually inspired American sentiment on these matters! And a British cardinal, Gasquet, tells you that the critics of the dear Church are "merchants of filth and garbage" who pour out such a "Mississippi of lies" that he is bound to wonder if they are "in good faith!"

Naturally the Church will never again burn heretics. Even if it ever got a large majority of sincere believers in Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Brazil it would not dare to apply its law for fear of the reaction in America and Britain. Only if all the leading countries became solidly Catholic would it venture to do so—and it then certainly would apply the law—and one might as well think of a new Ice Age. The world has sunk low in recent years, but the supposition that America, Britain, France, and Germany, would ever by a large majority accept the childish creed and crooked principles of Dr. Ryan's Church is too eccentric to consider. I enlarge on the creed and its maxims only to remind the reader that all baptized persons (Catholic or, if properly baptized, Protestant) are its subjects, and that it holds the power of life and death and all penalties over its subjects, so you understand how its leaders come to ally themselves with arch-criminals when these promise to restore its moth-eaten powers: how they can stoop, as they do in Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Brazil to put the false brand of Communists or murderous Reds on their critics so that sycophantic statesmen will kill or torture them and the world-press will say nothing.

## Chapter II

## BLINKERS FOR THE BELIEVER

The loathsome little toad Goebbels has never forgotten his Catholic education. The entire scheme by means of which he has, apparently, poisoned the minds of the overwhelming majority of the German people is based upon Catholic principles and practice. The scheme has, notoriously, two main features. The first is to print deep upon the mind by hourly appeals to eye and ear the essential Nazi formulae: that the German race is far superior to any other, that its head is a particularly august and gifted man who must have absolute obedience and any sacrifice he demands, and that there is no salvation for any other nation except in the unity of German culture and under German control. These assertions are repeated every moment at every class in school and college, boomed out in the streets, the workshops, and the restaurants, radioed every hour into every home, repeated in every column of every paper, on every page of every book and magazine, sung at every concert and village-dance, incorporated in every drama and film, and implied in the "Heil Hitler" which you must repeat when you call in the dog or buy a pint of shrimps.

The second feature is that nothing must enter the eye or ear of any German to interfere with this good work. There is no private radio, and you are shot if you listen to foreign transmissions. Every paper, magazine, book, song, play, lecture, church, library, pageant, or sports meeting, etc., in Germany falls under the control of a very extensive and elaborate Reichskulturkammer with a network of ramifications into every village. The social psychology is perfect. The older folk may have memories of facts or lessons learned in earlier years that may, in rare hours of privacy, feebly conflict with this monopolistic message. The younger folk have, on the street lines of modern science, no other contents of "mind"—ideas and sentiments, in the old language—than these which Nazi education has implanted.

The Black International must be green with envy. You might say that at all events it has the advantage over Goebbels that it can threaten folk who listen to any alien message with eternal torment, but in practice it was always more effective to threaten torture here and now than in the future. They recite the new Lord's Prayer

Lieber Herr Gott, mach' mich dumm,  
Damit Ich nicht in Dachau Komm:

much more fervently than they did the old. Young women who but a few years ago were "Children of Mary" and lustily sang "Immaculate, Immaculate" now carry favor by singing unpleasant suggestions about Miriam Cohen, which they insist was Mary's full name. For the great majority the Catholic or the Protestant faith was



skin-deep. The Nazi faith is pumped into the marrow of their bones.

The Church of Rome recognizes that the procedure is ideal but it is in most countries prevented by "the world" (with the devil behind it), the wickedness of which it never ceases to deplore from carrying it out in all its purity as Goebbels does. In Italy, in spite of the disgraceful sacrifices it has made, to get power, it is very far from having a monopoly of the culture-stream. In Vichy, France, it has, up to the present, been still more disappointed, and it remains to be seen how Laval will earn his Papal decorations. In Poland it almost had a Black Paradise but its Nazi friends have chased it out. Only in Spain and Portugal, in Brazil and some of the smaller Latin-American republics, and in stupid little states like Slovakia which the Nazis tolerate for the time being, has it got something like a monopoly of the mechanism for making what we call "minds."

Quebec may be indignant at being excluded from this small group of enslaved states but it is not quite on the present level of Spain and Portugal. In spite of the scandalous reticence of the press generally most folk who are likely to read this know the orgies of murder and torture in which Franco, under the eyes of complacent American and British ministers, has indulged since he won Spain for the Santa Fe. It has been going on for years in Portugal. Read the section on Portugal (pp. 278-86) in Seldes's *Catholic Crisis*. After quoting what Jesuits admiringly tell America about it—that it is "an applied resume of Catholic political philosophy" and a land of profound peace, prosperity, and happiness—he gives this passage from Duff, the official of the British Foreign Office who wrote as "Carlos Prieto":

Political prisoners are tortured in a manner which prevailed during the Inquisition. . . . As reported by those who suffered [*Time and Tide*, September 12, 1936], they include thumb-screws, burning of the soles of the feet, squeezing the head in bookpresses, hanging by wrists and ankles, nude imprisonment in temperatures below zero, and walking in a circle until the prisoner drops.

Salazar being a scientific man has added an electric chair, not to kill but to torture, which is more beastly. This was written six years ago, when Portugal was generally described as a happy little state under its holy Catholic trinity of General Cammona, Premier Salazar, and Cardinal Cerejeira.

In blissful lands like this, in which the majority of the workers are totally illiterate and would regard a radio receiver as a new trick of the devil, where the clergy and a small minority of interested supporters enjoy the bulk of what wealth there is, the Black International can fairly emulate the success of Goebbels. In countries like America they apply the two principles as effectively as the wicked world allows them. They rely chiefly upon the Catholic school, the Catholic press, and the threat of hell for reading "bad books" or listening to critics.

I described the operation of the Catholic schools in an earlier book of this series. The apologist wants the public to believe that—here he puts on his most affable expression—it is just an institution like any other school for making efficient citizens so



is entitled to a full share of public funds, but the Church provides the schools and asks only that it be allowed to give a few lessons to the children in their own faith. I gave the words in which the Pope in his open letter to Cardinal Gasparri in 1929 expressly condemned that version of Catholic education. He claimed not only that the education of children belongs primarily to the Church not the state but he went on to say that the Church would not agree to being "confined to the subsidized teaching of religious truth:" that is to say, to including lessons on religion by paid priests or teachers in the ordinary curriculum. The Church must have the whole school. Its predominant purpose is to make life-long Catholics. The Pope (Pius XI) made his meaning clear enough in his encyclical on Catholic education:

A school does not become conformable to the rights of the Church and of the Christian family and worthy to be attended by Catholic children simply because religious instruction is given. . . . That a school may be such all its teaching, all its arrangements, teachers, program, and books, at all levels, must be inspired by the Christian spirit, under the direction and maternal vigilance of the Church, so that religion may be truly both the foundation and the crown of all instruction, in all grades, not only primary but also intermediate and higher.

The school, in other words, must be a perfect Goebblesque institution. It must strike one note—Holy Faith, Holy Father, Holy Mother—and see that it is not disturbed by any other note. I do not know about America but in Britain the Catholic clergy get about 50 percent of the cost of this sort of thing met out of public funds and fire their people with a cry that they are treated with gross injustice and prejudice because it is not more.

I told in an earlier book how, not satisfied with this, they tried to get the teaching, especially the historical lessons, in the public schools modelled on Catholic lines. J. W. Poynter, who was at the time in the inner circle or plotting center of British Catholicism, describes the conspiracy in **Roman Catholics and School History Books** (1930). It amazed and disgusted him even while he was a Catholic. They operated with such stealth that, although he was a member of their Vigilance Committee, they tried to keep him in ignorance, but he contrived to see a copy of the privately printed two-volume work (1,400 pages) of the "errors" they wanted corrected in the books in use in government schools. Luther was to be described as "an unworthy German friar" and Bloody Mary—the most truculent fanatic who ever sat on the English throne—as a gentle lady who was all for religious freedom. They relied on Catholic Trade Unionists and Catholic officials in the Education Department to secure this monstrous gain for them. Is that what they have done in Boston and other American cities?

The books they use in their own schools and shower upon the children as prizes are poisonous and crammed with lies about saints and martyrs, Popes, the medieval Church, the Reformation, and so on. I have before me a book written for children and child-like adults by the Australian Archbishop Sheehan and much used in Ireland and Australia (**A Simple Course of Religion**, 1938). It is deliciously illustrated. There is a half-tone illustration of Adam and



Eve with less clothing on than Tarzan and Maureen. There is another—but in this case the child is conscientiously warned that it is “not a real picture”—of the Holy Trinity and (an old man, a Nordic type of young man, and a pigeon): one showing the boy Jesus (“he who made the starry skies”) holding a board while Papa planes it: one of Jesus giving “Holy Communion” to the apostles 1900 years ago in the form of wafers from a modern silver chalice: one showing a soul, which is a duplicate of the body, being taken up to heaven by angels. Most children will take these to be photographs of the actual persons and events.

The learned archbishop might plead that it is lawful to tell children fairy-tales and open their eyes later, but almost as childish is another book I have, by Bishop H. G. Graham (*What Faith Really Means*, 1914), that is intended for grown-ups. Some of you may still boggle at my description of the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist: that the real living body of Jesus is physically present in every consecrated wafer and drop of wine. Graham to clinch the matter, tells his readers that Jesus “often appeared to holy priests at Mass under the sweet figure of a little child” (p. 92). I told, I think, how another of these pious fairy-tales is that blood often spurts from the wafer when wicked Freemasons and Satanists stab it. We are not told that Jesus ever does anything when he is handled (in the Mass) by priests who smile at the dogma or sleep with their domestic servants. However, these doctrines are so luminously true that it is “impossible to shake a Catholic’s faith,” the bishop says. Then how about these millions of acknowledged seceders in America and Britain? There is no such thing as a quite honest seceder, Graham—in full accord with Canon Law—says. Referring to the man who professes that he has left the Church he says: “We know for certain that he has gone wrong, and that he has culpably lost the gift of faith”: when a priest secedes Catholics who become aware of it—the fact is denied unless the scoundrel takes to writing books and it can be denied no longer—are always taught that the reason was either pride, lust of women, or to get more drink; as if the apostate priest, who generally takes years to earn a moderate living, got one-tenth the opportunities for fornication or had one-tenth the chances to get drunk that he had in the Church.

This zone of poison-gas to protect the “precious gift of faith” which is planted in the child’s mind begins to be formed in the school. But in a non-Catholic country the defences are very imperfect. From the exotic atmosphere of the school the child rushes, especially in the late afternoon, into a very different atmosphere. Distinguished paedagogists and psychologists have inquired very learnedly into the frequency of religious conversion in the adolescent. That sort of inquiry is legitimate. It does not offend Catholics. But no academic authority ever studies the immensely greater frequency of religious de-version (if I may use the word) amongst the adolescent, especially Catholic boys and youths. It is a common subject of discussion at conferences of Catholic teachers, and I have earlier quoted the admissions of various priests that from 50 to 80 percent of the boys who attend Catholic schools give up the faith when they leave. Goebbels can keep the blinkers on Nazi boys during all their waking hours. The world outside the school is as saturated with the Nazi creed as the school itself. But the Catholic



boy tears off his blinkers when the five or six hours in school are over and sees the world of reality.

I broadly described the system by means of which the priests try to protect in post-school years the "Catholic mind" they have built up. The weekly sermon, the Catholic press and literature, and now the Catholic Radio Hour are the chief agencies, and the main purpose of them is to keep the faithful in their blinkers. The pretence that the sole object is to maintain a high moral character in the Catholic body is disproved by the actual character of that body, as I have shown in earlier books and will further show in the final book of this series; and the pretence that it is to attract outsiders to the faith is disproved by the miserable trickle of 25,000 converts (often for social or other non-religious grounds) a year. The greatest concern of the national branches of the Black International in all non-Catholic or mixed countries is to protect the belief of Catholics themselves by a smoke-screen.

I am not sure if I ought not to say, as I hinted above, a poison-gas zone to keep the believers from straying into alien pastures. It is another of the discreditable distinctions of the Church of Rome that its priests and writers consistently use fouler language about their critics and opponents than do the writers or clergy of any other Church. The law of libel alone restrains them. During the forty-five years in which I have criticised the Church—and they will probably say that I am its most formidable critic—I have never known them to put in print—they, of course, put all sorts of picturesque rumors into whispered circulation—one single word reflecting on my character in such form that I could have the matter settled in court, yet it is the almost universal practice to say that opponents of the Church are dishonest and mendacious. I quoted the most learned cleric of the British Catholic Church, Cardinal Gasquet affirming that we pour out a "Mississippi of lies." But you probably know this feature of Catholic literature and propaganda. These booklets contain hundreds of examples.

The psychology of it is simple. The main element of the education of the Catholics themselves is that the body of doctrine is so beautiful, so clearly true and reasonable, that no one can be in good faith who abandons it and no one can resist its appeal who really knows it. It is on this basis alone that Catholics can be reconciled to the intolerance which claims complete liberty, or even a privileged position, in a non-Catholic country and flatly denies liberty to other religions in a Catholic land, as to the gross inconsistency of the clergy in urging them to get non-Catholics to read or listen to Catholic stuff while sternly forbidding them to read what the non-Catholic says. But even the Catholic, if he happens to stumble upon, for instance, the official report that 31 percent of the conscripts for the armed forces confess to Catholic baptism while only about 20,000,000 members of the Church are claimed (or about 15 percent instead of 31), must feel that it is rather thin to impute "bad faith" to these millions of seceders, and that the claim that the faith is irresistible to those who know it, when the immense annual expenditure on books, papers, lectures, and radio brings in only a few thousand converts a year is still thinner.

So the Church imposes on believers the supplementary theory that their faith is so holy and so necessary for good conduct in this



world and salvation in the next that its arch-enemies the world and the devil, engage in a gorgeous campaign of lies and misrepresentation against it. This may sound melodramatic, but after what we saw about the real nature of Catholic dogmas and the extraordinary pride of Catholics in them you will expect melodramatic or childish features. It is a unique religious system, and it is on that basis alone that we can understand the action of the Black International in openly conspiring with the enemies of America and Britain and of modern civilization yet retaining the enthusiastic allegiance of 17,000,000 Americans and Britishers.

Naturally this line of argument is handed out on every possible note, from hesitating insinuation to blunt and blatant affirmation. Most people would be surprised at the extent to which even educated Catholics accept it. Soon after I left the Church I met on the streets of London a Catholic teacher, master of a school in a middle-class suburb, who knew me. He turned pale, either with anger or fear, and asked me, very seriously, if I was not afraid that the earth would open and let me down to where I belonged. Another, an older and better-read Catholic schoolmaster, who had been an admirer of mine and to whom I proposed to explain my secession, replied (in a letter reproduced in my *Twelve Years in a Monastery*) that he would not listen to a word but left me to "the worm of conscience" and only trusted I would not sink to "the lowest depths." A well-known priest of high character wrote me that he supposed he would soon hear that I had "run off with another man's wife." A Catholic novelist can hardly introduce an ex-priest into his story without leaving him under a dark cloud and souring the reader against him.

All this is part of the blinker-system of the Church. One, of course, finds some degree of hostility to or dislike of seceders in every Church but in none does it approach the virulent hatred of seceders and critics inspired by the Black International. Poynter, who had been for years on the inner councils of Catholic Action, told me, though I hardly needed the information, that the instruction given to writers and speakers was that they must not directly attack name critics of the Church—people might want to read their books—but keep up the fiction that all such critics and apostates are a lot of scurvy knaves, sold to the devil and cooperating in his frenzy to destroy the beautiful Church which alone frustrates his strange passion to pervert the whole race. Dip into almost any Catholic weekly if you want a little clean fun. Correspondents have often told me of the effect of all this on Catholics. They turn pale if my name is maliciously dragged into a conversation with them. They burn my books when they get an opportunity. Once, soon after I left the Church, a society billed me in large posters, to lecture in the city of Manchester, and most of the bills were torn off the walls during the night. I may confess since she came to more liberal views before she died, that it was my sister, a Catholic schoolmistress, who spent a night roaming over the city, dodging the police and tearing down the posters.

This calculated hatred and slander of critics has the double effect of preventing Catholics from reading them and at the same time convincing them that their faith really is the most beautiful and salutary thing in the world seeing that the devil and wicked



men have such a peculiar rage against it. Add that, as Bishop Graham says and theology and Canon Law expressly teach, it is a mortal sin (like rape or murder) to have even a doubt about a dogma of the Church, and it is equally a mortal sin to expose yourself to the danger of having a doubt by reading critics, and you have the particular strength of the Catholic prohibition of the reading of "bad books." Works or articles which criticize the faith or the priests in even the most dignified language are purposely bracketed by the Church with what it calls obscene books. They are in fact, proved by that famous Catholic logic to be worse than obscene books. How? Quite easily. The sin of fornication or masturbation to which the obscene book may lead can be confessed and dismissed from the mind. But the doubt, the devil's own child, has a way of lingering or recurring after confession. . . .

One of the real mistakes of outsiders about the Church—they are almost always mistakes in favor of the Church or failures to realize the full absurdity or monstrosity of its doctrines—is to suppose that the priest, like any other religious minister, just paternally warns his "flock" that it is dangerous to read books against his faith. Not a bit of it. The Church of Rome is again unique, as it always is when it is protecting the interests of the Black International. No other religion has gone so far as to put "Commandments of the Church" on the same level as the Decalogue and say that transgression of them is punishment with eternal torment. And it is a very stern law of the Church that forbids the reading of "bad books."

The domestic or private part of the Canon Law in its latest version—now an official code not a professor's lectures—may be read in English, if you can safely separate the text from the bemusing commentary in Woywood's **Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law**: One of the longest clauses in it (1399) deals with the reading of books against faith or morals. The Catholic must not read any non-Catholic translation of the Bible—the English Bible, for instance, or books which defend "fortune-telling, divination, or magic," or books that defend the law of divorce, etc. You wonder how he gets through the Sunday paper. However, the main point is that he must not read "books by any non-Catholic treating professedly of religion unless it is certain that they contain nothing contrary to the Catholic faith" or any books "tending in any way to undermine the very foundations of religion." Certain Catholics may get permission from the bishop (who in practice delegates the authority to confessors) to read a book of this kind if they have a serious reason, not merely curiosity, but even the bishop's permission "exempts nobody from the provisions of the natural law which forbids the reading of books that are for the particular reader a proximate occasion of sin" or, in other words, may inspire a doubt. So the permission given with the right hand is taken away with the left. And lest you should think that this is just an academic prohibition—a sort of paternal "don't let me catch you with your pants down"—clause 2318 grimly says that Catholics who possess or read, without permission, books by apostates criticizing the Church are *ipso facto* excommunicated. That is hell with the lid off. By the very act of reading a single paragraph they incur the awful penalty and cannot approach the Church to confess it or



hold communication with any other Catholics. The Church will give a gorgeous funeral to a notorious boss-gangster and murderer but will insist that the monster who has read one of these booklets and not been reconciled shall be buried like a dog. Any priest can absolve the murderer but the wretch who has read one of McCabe's foul books without the bishop's permission has to be re-admitted to the Church by the bishop or the Pope.

You begin to understand the defense-mechanism of the Black International but you have not yet got the half of it. It obviously follows that the Catholic must not attend a lecture in which the Church may be criticised. Once, lecturing in a district which had a large Catholic population I saw two burly Irish priests brazenly walk through the room and look at every face to see if any of their parishioners had dared to attend! On the next Sunday, doubtless, they would urge Catholics to drag their non-Catholic friends to a Catholic lecture. But it is not generally known that the Catholic is forbidden under the same penalty to enter into private discussion of religion with any man who has the ability or the knowledge to disturb him. Clause 1325 runs:

Catholics shall not enter into any disputes or conferences with non-Catholics—especially public ones—without the permission of the Holy See or, in urgent case, of the local Ordinary (bishop).

The public debate is here forbidden only a little more stringently than the discussion of religion with a non-Catholic neighbor. You may at times have noticed how shy of discussing his faith your neighbor is, but this particular clause is not widely known to Catholics, and the priest is careful not to mention it. The unbeliever might scoff, and even the believer might become suspicious when he is told that his faith is solidly based that it is "absolutely impossible to shake it" yet he must not argue about it with a non-Catholic friend.

Catholics never read Canon Law. It is the priest's business to convey these commands of the Church to the faithful. During his visits to his parishioners he has a keen scent for heretical books, and I have known him to put books of mine (loaned by request) on the fire in the house to emphasize the law and his authority. Chiefly he acts through sermons. He talks more about bad books than he does about chastity, and to a point we will admire his honesty, for he would far rather see them reading spicy novels than criticisms of the Church. Every Catholic, therefore, is quite familiar with the law. But do not imagine that you will disturb him by pointing out that he challenges you to read both sides but must absolutely refuse himself to read your side. Error, remember, has not the same rights as truth. In any case, he will tell you his writers and lecturers always faithfully tell him what the opponents of the Church say. The poor fish! If there is one field of their work in which they are more recklessly untruthful than another it is in quoting or giving an account of the arguments of their opponents or suppressing all knowledge of them. Quotations are false and no exact reference given so that you cannot check them. Priests writing on science are shorn of their clerical titles and passed off as authorities. Writers on science of the last century are quoted

as living authorities. . . . But my works abound in examples of the unscrupulous trickery exercised in this field.

As to the Index of Prohibited Books, although it is still in force and receives an addition every few years, you may dismiss it from consideration. No priest has a copy of it, and Catholics have no idea of the utter stupidity which the Vatican has betrayed in compiling it. Originally and until the 18th Century it served as a guide to Inquisitors in examining the library of a suspect. For the last century and a half criticisms of the Church have poured out in such floods even in Latin countries, that it is impossible to compile a catalogue; and there would not be much good literature left outside it. The Church relies on the general prohibition of the Canon Law and the libeling of critics. Non-Catholic writers who praise the "discipline" and "organization" of the Church are as culpable as those who a few years ago praised the discipline and organization of the Fascist or the Nazi party. One wonders if they recognize it even now when they see the Black International in alliance with the powers of evil.



## Chapter III

## DRAWING THE DRAGON'S TEETH

From figures which I have earlier given we are compelled to conclude that if the Roman Church in America has only about 15,000,000 genuine members there must be at least a further 10,000,000 who were baptized in the Church and have abandoned it. How did they come to surmount the spiked rails the Church puts round them and venture beyond the poison-zone which it lays between them and its critics. From observation and inquiry I should say that the great majority of these seceders never read anything against the Church. Living psychology is a matter of great fluidity and infinite variations, but you can fairly divide this mass of seceders into two classes: a minority of thinking and reading folk and a majority of folk who think little and read less.

The apologetic plea that these millions of the majority-folk are therefore men and women who just "resented the restraints which the good Church put upon their passions" and are **pretending** to have lost faith in it is so childish that you may find it difficult to believe that it is urged. Very large numbers of Catholics have friends, neighbors, or relatives who have left the Church and know how false this theory of their secession is: besides that the idea that church-goers do not drink or misbehave as much as seceders will tickle many Catholics. "In my parish," said a Glasgow priest to me when I was in the Church, "young folk do not marry until they have proof that they will have children"; and your 10,000,000 American seceders must be heroic if they drink more than the Irish or are more amorous than the Latin Americans. "Since a Polish force was encamped in this district," a British correspondent wrote me a few weeks ago, "all the girls are pregnant." I will give figures and authorities in a later book.

The simplest and most plausible explanation of secession from the Roman Church is the utter absurdity, arbitrariness, or inhumanity of its characteristic doctrines as I have described them. You need no malevolent critic or devil-inspired book to help you to see this. As a matter of fact the heaviest secessions, I have shown, are of boys of fourteen to sixteen or seventeen, and the moralist who suggests that they want to "give rein to their passions" is as absurd as the man who supposes that to any extent they read books criticising the Church. They came as spontaneously, or with a little assistance from comrades in the workshop, to see that what they have been taught is "crazy" as the artist who knows only the rich church near his home thinks its services beautiful. This is, in fact, often the development in the case of well-educated as well as uneducated seceders. Reading critics of the Church or theology had nothing whatever to do with my own secession, and I have met many other men of intellectual life who rejected Romanism be-



cause, without outside impulse, they sat down to a critical study of their beliefs.

"It Pays to Advertise" businessmen say, in the language of a certain comedy. Not always. The Church of Rome in America spends hundreds of millions of dollars annually in advertising its goods to the general public, and its crop of 20,000 converts a year is hardly worth \$10,000 a year to it. It is advertising obviously unsound goods, and folk stream out of it because they see this. Doubt usually precedes inquiry. When a man begins to suspect that the iron hand of the Church is a device in its own interest, when he looks fantastic or repulsive doctrines squarely in the face, he crosses the spiked fence and the poison-zone and his eyes are opened to the great deception that has been practiced on him. The first step is largely a matter of temperament.

That is, I think, in most cases the psychology of the seceder, and the clerical defense-mechanism I have described is useless against it. But even the first faint doubt is very apt to be inspired by some news in the press or some remark in conversation, by the sight of the growing general indifference to religion, by reflection on the obvious fact that so few men of any intellectual distinction ever join the Church, and so on. The doubt that arises justifies a man in looking outside the Church for help in checking its doctrines, and he soon learns how unscrupulous Catholic writers are in pretending to state the arguments of their critics.

For instance, I noticed in an earlier book a volume in which the very popular and allegedly learned apologist Fulton Sheen complains that Catholicism is actually "intellectually impoverished" by the lack of "a good sound intellectual opposition" today. In the same work he has a chapter on the evolution of man, and he tells his Catholic readers that only "two fossils" have been found that have a bearing on it. The Catholic reader is free to go to the Natural History Museum to see the "two fossils" or to take out a book on prehistoric man, and he finds that at the time when Sheen made this idiotic statement (betraying an incredible ignorance of the subject) the prehistoric remains already discovered would, if decently interred, fill a nice little cemetery. The Catholic, however orthodox, no longer wonders that no scientific man cares to notice his apologists, and he goes from science to history and finds that the deception is even greater. He realizes that the idea that "the world"—which means everything and everybody outside Catholicism—is so vicious and depraved that it has to be coupled with the flesh and the devil, is a clerical trick, and that the malice and untruth are in the Church itself.

To combat this danger the Church in non-Catholic countries like America relies on the third part of its defense-mechanism: the first being, as I said, the Catholic school, the second the stern prohibition of any access to criticism of the Church. Isolation of the active-minded Catholic is no longer possible, though the majority of the 7,000,000 or so adult members of the Church in America may be trusted to isolate themselves. Of 200 people living in the street in which I write I should say that one-fifth never read anything and one-fifth never look at anything above the level of the picture-paper or a weak sentimental novel. American Catholics with their very large proportion of immigrants and the poorer work-



ers come under an even less flattering analysis. But there are millions of ordinary citizens amongst them who read the daily paper through, use the free or subscription library and mix freely with neighbors of all religions or none. It is from this body that the secessions occur, and it has been found futile to hope to counteract all the news and impressions they pick up by sophistry and untruth in the Catholic weekly. The Black International must neutralize the poison in the sources of their information and their impressions. This work began with the plausible plea, on the lives of good-neighborly feeling, that nothing must be said or done that is "offensive to Catholics," and this was so easily accomplished that the Black International went on to ensure to a remarkable extent that the sources of a man's ideas and impressions—newspapers, radios, books, libraries, political speeches, etc.—should be used to flatter the Church and lie about its defects and its achievements.

These two series of booklets contain so many hundred illustrations of this that I might be content to leave the matter there, but unfortunately few people realize to what an appalling extent this one-tenth of the nation, with its prodigious wealth and its powerful organization, have been permitted to poison the wells of public instruction. Until Japan made its crafty attack on America it was common to hear rather disdainful expressions about the way in which France and Britain had been led by the nose to the brink of the pit which the Nazis and Fascists had dug. In Australia and Canada as well as America the old formula that the British are an old and effete nation, destined to lose the high position they had won in history, was revived and generally repeated. The apostasy of France did not open the eyes of critics to the truth, for even now the press will not tell how the Church had worked for that betrayal. The situation is now much the same in America and Britain, yet in neither country is there even a broad recognition—in spite of the stubborn isolationism of Catholics to the last moment and the present disgraceful conduct of the Church in Quebec—of the monstrous part that the Black International has played or the fact that both countries were kept slumbering by a press that gravely betrayed them under the equal influence of Catholicism and capitalism.

At the moment, for instance, there is some fuss because in the very middle of its foul onslaught Japan is announced to have exchanged ambassadors with the Vatican. I take it—there is not time for American news on this point to reach me—that your apologists smoothe out the anger as they do here. One British paper (*Glasgow Herald*), a fairly independent and honest daily, ventured to express its editorial indignation, and this was at once counteracted by a long letter from a Catholic (a Benedictine abbot, I believe) of the most untruthful and misleading character. The gist of it was that the Vatican had for years sought in vain permission from the Japanese to supervise the spiritual interests of its subjects in Japan, and no one would expect it to withdraw from so purely religious a request, especially as the Church "never interferes in politics," when the Japs offered it in the present year. This is the usual constructive lie relying on the poor memory of the public and the reluctance of editors to recall facts which Catholics would resent.

My readers know that in 1937 (*The A B C Library of Living*



**Knowledge**, No. 6) I fully warned them of the criminal aims of Japan and the close cooperation of the Vatican with it since 1931. I said, and I gave the evidence in an earlier book of this series, that the plan to exchange ambassadors was agreed upon in 1935, as the Pope's own paper, the *Osservatore*, joyously announced. In the British press this development of cordial relations with the Vatican, in order to get Catholic influence on the press all over the world, was smothered in the usual way, but Americans ought to have known what to expect. In October (14) 1937 the Associated Press had a cable from its Rome correspondent generally reproduced in the papers. The information was from "a reliable Vatican source" and was to the effect that "the Holy See has instructed its hierarchy and missions in the Far East to cooperate with Japanese action in China," and the memorandum it had sent was calculated to "give the Japanese military authorities the clear impression that on the part of the Catholic Church there is no obstacle to complete collaboration." The message was, Seldes says, denied by the Vatican and by the Pope's representative at Washington. The A.P. replied that its agent had got the message confirmed at the Vatican Press Bureau before he issued it. The well-known journalist, Pegler, stated in a syndicated article (which is before me now) that from his own knowledge of the Vatican Press Bureau, which he described as corrupt, he had no doubt of the truth of the report and that "the editors of the Catholic Press in this country are not ignorant of the situation." Yet the Catholic press denied it with the usual show of anger and injured innocence, and the whole weight of the Church's influence was used to dupe the public. And meantime, as I showed, the Vatican continued to cultivate the most cordial relations with Japan and gave Matsuoka, its special agent for hoodwinking America, a gold medal when he visited the Pope in 1941. The plea that Japan has for the first time acceded to the Pope's long pressure for diplomatic relations and that the purpose is purely ecclesiastical is brazen but Catholics get away with it. They control the press.

This was not the first or weightiest proof of the way in which the Black International in America had begun to poison the wells. In 1936 Franco had raised the flag of revolt in Spain. The spontaneous reaction of America was to support the Spanish government, in spite of the flood of libels of it already released in the Catholic press, as the revolt was notoriously a Fascist attempt to destroy a democracy. Seldes estimated that 98 percent of America was against Franco. 50 percent of American Catholics were against him (as shown by a Gallup Survey), but 98 percent of the Catholic prelates were strong against the Spanish government. So the duped laity of Catholic Action were driven into the field by their clerical slave-drivers. By 1938 hardly a paper in America did justice to the Loyalists or dare speak of "Rebels." Every Catholic-Fascist lie was endorsed, and the most contemptible methods were adopted to suppress the truth and secure the triumph of injustice. When a small group of Spanish priests came over to tell America the truth they were pitilessly persecuted. Proprietors of halls were threatened if they wanted to open them to the priests, and managers of hotels were threatened if they gave them rooms. Firms were even bullied and boycotted for sending medical supplies to the Spanish govern-



ment. Roosevelt was induced by Catholics to load the scales against the hard-pressed democrats by an Embargo, and when the open and cynical intervention of Italy and Germany showed that it was unjust, he was dissuaded by Catholics from lifting it. A Washington official is said to have declared that the one man in America who could get the cruel Embargo lifted was Cardinal Mundelein. In the end it was difficult to ascertain the truth. Publishers who accepted books which told it, newspapers which reviewed them, and libraries which circulated them were threatened or penalized. It was a massive exhibition of the virtually Fascist power which the Black International had won in America.

Seldes gave a list of 18 general charges against the Church of grave misconduct in turning (as it always does) the tolerance which it had won in America into a bitter intolerance of others and a use of violent and unscrupulous methods to prevent the public from learning the truth. As far as machinery is concerned these charges are that it exercises in its own interest a most vicious pressure on the press—it has made an end of the boasted freedom of the press in America—publishers, libraries, public meetings, and the letting of public buildings by state authorities. Seldes should have added a scandalous interference with the school-books used in public schools (Boston, etc.). It achieves its aim generally by intimidation, sometimes by organizing mobs of fanatical or low-class Catholics to use violence. Generally it is enough to threaten a secession of Catholic readers or advertisers. Certain papers which have done so much to lower the standard of American journalism are ready and eager at any time to reap profit by catering to the Catholic authorities and attracting Catholics from papers which make some effort to make a stand for freedom and independence; just as there has been a lamentable growth in America of writers, especially of history, who manipulate or color the facts to get Catholic recommendation and circulation. Newspapers and books used to be the most dangerous part of that "world" which the Black International dreaded, so they have with almost complete success drawn the teeth of the dragon.

Heywood Broun said years ago that "there is not a single New York editor who does not live in terror of this group." I spent six months in New York in 1917 and wanted to get out a book on the Roman Church. I had not then met Haldeman-Julius and did not know how he kept the banner of freedom flying in a corner of Kansas. But a well-known New York publisher told me that I would not find a publisher for such a work in New York. My friend G. H. Putnam had published one for me, but he complained that he had hoped I would be less critical and he did not publish another. He had submitted the manuscript of his own History of the Index to several priests before he published it. The general excuse of journalists, editors, writers, publishers, librarians, and bookstore-owners is that they do not want to stir sectarian strife. There can be few of them who do not recognize in their own minds today that if there had not been this mighty conspiracy during the last ten years to suppress all news that the Church wanted suppressed the world would not have drifted into its present appalling condition.

The political weapon for breaking the teeth of their opponents is similar to the economic; indeed both are at the bottom economic.



It is astonishing to find an intelligent Catholic repeating the clerical bleat that "the Church never interferes in politics." Some writers discuss the matter at length but the answer is simple. Whenever the interests of the Church are involved in any political issue it not only interferes but on its own principles is bound to do so, and no one accuses it of interfering in a political struggle in which its own interests, directly or indirectly, are not involved. But when you reflect that its "interests" mean, not simply the moral or religious welfare of its subjects but very decidedly the acquisition of power and wealth—as a means of doing further good, of course—you see how easily it is entangled in political troubles.

Why in New York did it take so open a part on the reactionary side in the struggle for the Child Labor Amendment, in Washington on the question of the enlargement of the Supreme Court, in various places in local labor disputes? Why did it flirt so openly with Wall Street and the annexationists during the church-trouble in Mexico? These are American matters which I leave to writers like Seldes, but why the sacred fury year after year against Russia and Communism? The persecution of religion was a false and hollow excuse. The outstanding reasons were to protect the enormous wealth which the Church has in many countries and to win the interest and favors of capitalists like Ford.

I have dealt in an earlier book with the remaining aspect of the Roman Church's justification of its censorship, intolerance, bullying, bribery, and corruption of the organs of public instruction: its plea that in getting a large control of the movies and the circulation of books and plays it serves a most important national purpose by scotching immoral tendencies. It is far more anxious to suppress a pro-Spanish (democratic) film like "Blockade" or a pro-Russian film than to cut out an occasional sex-joke or to turn the clerical microscope upon the celluloid strip of a bathroom or bedroom scene. American law has in this respect fixed the limits of freedom as narrowly as any other and more narrowly than the law of most Catholic countries, and the American public are generally content with the police-interpretation of the law. They want no dog-collared amateurs to assist them. The Black International seeks this power partly because it raises its prestige in the country and partly to complete its control of the means of enlightening the public. To an outsider it seems amazing how Americans, who in spite of police and parsons show in their novels, plays and films that they take as sensible a view of sex as any in the world, tolerate this hypocritical meddling of a minority which merely seeks to advertise and augment its own power. It reminds me of a certain British author who was well-known for his writings on and zeal against the White Slave Traffic. A friend who lived in the same block of apartments—very expensive apartments—as he in London, assured me that it was not uncommon to see the man going, half or more than half drunk, to his rooms at night with a "white slave" on each arm.

For some readers, in fine, who may have happened to meet a few priests and who are reluctant to accept what they feel to be a very serious indictment of the clerical body, let me add a few words. This attitude is usually very illogical. I have met men who adopted it on the strength of a social meeting with a single priest or bishop.



Not only has this no relation to the question of the methods of the clerical body, not only are priests in such circumstances only too anxious to impress a non-Catholic as very tolerant and broadminded, but scientific research has exploded the fallacy that you can read a man's "character" in that fashion. I am from a very long and wide experience as good a judge of character as any, yet I was cheated out of \$10,000, my life-savings, by a lady I had known well for 20 years and considered of exceptionally high character.

My indictment of the clergy, however, is not so much an ethical charge as a claim that their professional zeal forces them into practices which are gravely prejudicial to the interests of the community. I will not be misunderstood. Priests are, as a body, far from being men of high character. They are not chosen for character and do not take up the career as a rule from the motives which the laity imagine. The skepticism which the majority of them develop in one degree or other and the clandestine sex-relations they enjoy in spite of vows engender a hypocrisy which poisons character. But the question of character is not so much involved in the charges I make here. Chiefly I accuse them of a comprehensive conspiracy to get the truth suppressed in the organs of public instruction, and when this is the suppression of truth which would injure the Church they regard it as a virtue. Even on the positive side, when they pour out, to use their own words against them, "a Mississippi of lies," you have to remember their ethical theory of "mental reservation." The strict meaning of this is that you may, if the person you are addressing has "no right to the truth"—and no one has a right to the kind of truth that hurts the Church—use words that he takes to mean something which you say in your own mind that you do not mean. It is commonly interpreted as a license to lie in the interest of the Church or the clergy. My own professor of theology, a priest of great distinction in the clerical body at London, lied so easily and unblushingly in the interest of the Church that he clearly came to regard the line between truth and untruth as of little importance. Another British apologist, a man of generally stricter character, explains in a little volume of advice to lay apostles that there are two uses of facts. One is the logical way to use them—simply to state them correctly and let your hearer appraise them—and the other is the rhetorical use; by which he plainly means that when the facts correctly stated tell against the Church or contradict its writers you must make your statement of them innocuous or favorable to the Church.



## Chapter IV

## SUGAR PLUMS FOR THE LOYAL

But we waste time in any attempt to analyze the mind or the conscience of churchmen. The ugly and important fact is that they have secured such power over the organs of public instruction, even in countries where they are a small minority, that it is increasingly difficult to convey to the general public facts that they ought to know. I have no abstract or Platonist veneration for Truth, with a capital letter—you will probably find this quoted as a confession that I have no respect for truth—nor, on the other hand, am I a Pragmatist in the philosophical sense. In all my work I aim to convey truth in the form of facts critically—that is to say, intellectually—ascertained and verified, but especially facts of social significance or practical importance. That is the general attitude of thoughtful Americans, and they now find that, whereas fifty years of steady education and mental emancipation had opened up a promise of a triumphant spread of it, the Black International, in a vile cooperation with other corrupt interests, threatens to destroy all the liberty that had been won. This side of its work is of vital importance in relation to the theme of the present series of books: the question how it could keep the allegiance of 15,000,000 Americans and the superficial respect of the majority of the nation while during years it conspired with greedy plotters against America and civilization. And when these folk at the same time shout themselves red in the face with warnings against the diabolical machinations of Communists, Bolsheviks (now, Mr. Churchill says, “our noble Russian friends”), Atheists, Freemasons, and even Jews, the situation is nauseating.

How it is to be remedied I do not know. The press can help no longer, radio is in the hands of the enemy, politicians find the arrangement can be used to their own profit, and the immense body of university professors sit silent or, in a few cases, join the sycophants. It may be that our victory in the war will be followed by a strong anti-clerical reaction. Do not build on it. The Church will strain every nerve to keep the grim truth about its connection with the war concealed, and it is now a first principle of politicians of every shade that “we must not antagonize the Catholic Church.” What sort of state-structure they hope to build on that rotten foundation, and how leaders of advanced parties can follow this ignoble policy when wherever Fascism has triumphed (outside Germany) the priests are getting their comrades shot by the thousands, I do not know. I do my bit in the one field that is left open to me.

But we have not yet completed our description of the way in which the Black International protects the belief in the amazing bunch of ancient superstitions and medieval priestcraft which I described in the last book. Let us understand at once that the need of

protection is not so great as one would be inclined to expect after reading an account of the childish doctrines and tyrannical rules. Here we may confine ourselves to such countries as America and Britain, for the long account which I quoted of life in a Catholic city dispenses me from any need to explain why people cling to the faith in such conditions. The illiterate mass are in the condition of the Irishman who said, "Faith, if the Church said it was Jonah who swallowed the whale it wouldn't trouble me"—a story my professor of theology often repeated, hilariously, in class—and the small comfortable minority are protected in their privileged position by the priests.

One has first to appreciate the social and psychological value of the parish. All Churches have the advantage of providing this satisfaction of one of the fundamental instincts, but the Catholic clergy contrive to give a special force. The man who, finding other social contacts to replace it or preferring isolation to listening weekly to the mummery of the service and bleat of the sermon, ceases to attend church is more sourly ostracized in a Catholic than in any other sort of parish. He is a "bad Catholic," which is as odious a label as the priest can fasten on him. His wife is kept very sensitive of the gravity and disgrace of his condition, and many links of old friendship may have to be broken. Few who have taken an active part in what is called "the life of the parish" would like to face the soured atmosphere of their neighborhood if they left the Church. Thus for most of them the clerical warning to avoid books and lectures that may start a doubt is hardly necessary. The comfort, if not profit, of a hundred ties with Catholic neighbors, the weekly meeting at the church-door, the social meetings and entertainments in the parish-hall or the school, the feeling of membership of a large family and the interest in its life and fortunes, are worth far more than the cold and penalized satisfaction of knowing the truth.

For these folk who make up the greater part of the Catholic body, religion is, as I said, not so much a matter of conviction as of settled practices. They want no rupture or dislocation of the routine. They are, in clerical language, the "practicing" Catholics, and the way in which they are contrasted with the "non-practicing"—the conscientious and thoughtful folk who have dropped out—as virtue is contrasted with vice, is amusing.

Every reader who belongs or has at any time belonged to a religious congregation or parish knows how much this has to do with membership of a church. To those who have not experienced it we need only recall the furious zeal of the clergy to prevent the provision of alternatives on Sundays. In Britain no theater may be opened on Sundays, and concerts are provided only on special conditions. Until a year ago no cinema was open. When, under pressure of public opinion, a law was passed leaving it to local option whether the cinemas should be opened on Sunday, the harsh condition was attached that the proprietors must hand over the best part of the profit to charity, and in most districts the clergy organized their congregations in a spirited, and generally successful, fight to prevent the opening. They did not trust a large part of their own people to go to church if they had an alternative, although sermons have been ruthlessly cut, brighter music provided, and a Catholic



is not compelled to attend more than a 25-minute service on the Sunday morning.

For large numbers there are additional advantages. The Catholic store-keeper, medical man, journalist, teacher, employee of a Catholic employer, etc., dare not miss attendance. Women and girls, it is notorious, find it the opportunity of the week to show off some new apparel or see what others wear. Many consider that their matrimonial prospects are far brighter if they remain attached to one of these socio-religious bodies. An author has left it on record that he found the meeting in church a unique opportunity to admire the rounder feminine curves. . . . It is, in short, a very large error to suppose that a Catholic group or parish is a body of men and women bound together simply by a common belief in such doctrines as I described. Mainly it is a body of men and women whom the accidents of life and education put on a common path and the unpleasantness of quitting it seems to them not worth the cold reward of an intellectual satisfaction. It is the obvious absurdity of doctrines that compels many to face that unpleasantness. When the religious statistics are closely examined it will be seen that the Church which alone talks about conquering America has in the last forty years lost more than its rivals.

A special device of the Catholic clergy to restrict this large leakage as far as possible is the organization of the laity in special societies, guilds, fraternities, sororities, etc., so as to keep them closer under clerical vigilance and control. I have earlier explained how it is by means of these societies that the priest turns the obligation to confess once a year into an obligation to confess every month. Best known and most powerful of all in America is the Knights of Columbus, more than half a million strong, which renders most important services to the clergy and finds very substantial sums of money for them and the Pope. The society was founded in 1882 mainly as a "fraternal benefit society" or Catholic insurance company, and it still does a big and profitable business in insurance. With the usual grotesque false idea of the character of the European knights of the Middle Ages Catholic men were enrolled in what professed to be a chivalrous and romantic body of modern knights errant for the service of the Church and of each other. They became a vast association of Catholic men something in character between the Freemasons and the German Shock Troops with a few features borrowed from the Gestapo.

The article on them in the new **Encyclopedia Americana** is part of the advertising scheme of the Roman Church which is a feature of the work. It airily dismisses the much-discussed question of the secret oath of the Knights by saying: "Has no oath, only obligation of secrecy," which, when you are referring to a Catholic organization, is much like saying that a man "has no dog, only a canine quadruped." The form of oath that is often attributed to them seems to be a forgery based upon a crude idea of Catholic aims but one would like to know in what form the obligation of secrecy is imposed. A friend of mine, a distinguished Canadian, learned a few years ago, through an amusing hotel-adventure, that the Quebec Premier Taschereau had been initiated as a Knight but it must be kept a deadly secret. Imagine the leonine roar of the Catholic press if a president were discovered to have been secretly



initiated to Freemasonry! And what would be the position of Taschereau if the question of the annexation or *Anschluss* of Canada, for which the Knights are ready to work as they work for the annexation of Mexico, ever became a live issue?

However, the public action of the Knights is well known. What is of interest here is that the organization is probably the most valuable means that the Black International has in America for holding grown-up and educated men to a profession of those medieval speculations which I described in the last book. It enlists profit, patriotism, and piety in a harmonious regiment. To one-third it says: Be a Knight and expand your bank-roll. To another third: Be a Knight and break a lance for American (financial) institutions on these Reds, Mexican bandits, Anarchists, Atheists, Birth-controllers, etc. And to the genuine religious third it says: Be a Knight in the service of Mary and the Lord. Why leave the Church when it offers such golden, as well as gastronomic, opportunities? Since 1928 they have trained the young, as "Columbian Squires" for the high function of Knights. One trusts they have not to render all the services of the medieval squires and pages.

Seldes (*The Vatican*) tells us that during the few years before 1929, the period of the stormy courtship of Mussolini and the Pope, there were amusing variations of the public policy of the Fascists. At times when Mussolini was pressing and there was hope of an agreement the Fascist police stopped young women on the streets and painted marks on their stockings to which the skirts must be lowered. When the Pope pressed and the hope of a bargain grew faint—well, one gathers that the legs were not daubed in public and the low-water mark was much higher. The Church similarly adopts itself, and for the more puritanical laymen of the American Church, the men who cannot afford or do not like the social amenities and robust services of the Knights, it has organized the gentler society of the Holy Family. In this the wife may collaborate. An important duty of theirs is to denounce wicked books, plays, and pictures which have escaped the censor and are calculated to corrode the foundations of American civilization. The sororities of Catholic virgins are expected to cooperate in this, and the members face the duty of seeing whether a film is really proper as firmly as they face the intimate talk on sex in the confessional. Once I saw a remarkably long queue of women outside the chief picture-house in Chicago and learned that they were waiting to see a picture which had so unpleasant a reputation that the police were hourly expected to suppress it. Chicago was just then preparing for a Eucharistic Congress and in mitigation of the subservience of the civic authorities to the Church the papers explained that one-third of the citizens are devout Catholics. I concluded that the bright-eyed women in the queue were mostly Catholics who wanted to see if the film ought to be denounced to the police to save the women and children of America.

It is impossible here to name all the titles, decorations, and festivities of the groups into which the faithful are sorted; and, indeed, you will soon begin to wonder why so many millions leave the Church, if not why anybody leaves it. See, if you can, some account of the vast net of activities covering the life of America and centered in the offices of the National Catholic Welfare at



Washington. Everybody, from Catholic artists or scientists (number not stated) to Catholic shoe-shiners, is organized and directed by the clergy to discharge some function or other for Our Holy Mother the Church. It is the American version of what in other countries is called Catholic Action: the activity that invited Mussolini and Hitler to overthrow the legitimate government in Spain, delivered Vienna into the hands of the cardinal who strewed flowers in the path of Hitler when he seized it, got the freethinking politicians and bankers of Buenos Aires to give literally, a royal reception to Cardinal Pacelli when he arrived to plot against democracy in South America, filled the jails of Rio with the groans of tortured men, put Petain in power in France and for the first time in many centuries brought dishonor upon the country, betrayed Czechoslovakia, paralyzes Canada today, etc., etc. In an earlier book I quoted the Pope asking: "How could any fair-minded man say that the Church ever interferes in politics?" In the same year a Catholic writer in the Catholic fortnightly, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, opened his article with the sentence: "Rarely in history has the Catholic factor had such influence as it has today on the political movement throughout the world"; and he traced it in detail, and with much joy, in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Italy, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Rumania, and Japan.

In America and Britain the chief aim of Catholic Action, which specifically means action by the laity under clerical control, is to carry out that poisoning of the wells of public information which I have described, especially by intimidating the editors of newspapers, the publishers of books, and librarians. To the outside world this is presented as a very natural and innocent precaution that nothing offensive to Catholics is published. One would imagine at times, from the way Catholics talk, that the papers and books were until a few years ago filled with lies and libels against the innocent Church, stories of escaped monks and nuns and debauches in convents, unjust suspicions of plots on the part of the good Jesuits and the intensely spiritual Vatican, and so on. This is, of course, sheer nonsense. It is a mere face-saving excuse for the unfortunate editors and publishers who have to submit to the most brazen maneuvers of modern priestcraft. For the aim is not to exclude lies, which a paper easily detects and rejects, but to secure the suppression of the truth about life in the Catholic Church and the activities of the Vatican, which the public has a right to know and publicists a duty to tell, and to compel papers to publish untruthful statements to the advantage of the Church and libraries to accept and circulate books that contain them. Since the whole of these booklets illustrate that clerical maneuver I need not here enlarge further on it.

I have space to notice one more sugar plum, the sweetest of all for the laity: the sale or awarding of Papal honors, titles, and decorations. Knights and counts are a dollar a dozen in Europe. It is in the democratic atmosphere of America that these things sparkle most. But I have dealt with them earlier. As a rule they are, like titles in Britain, directly or indirectly bought. They are a reward for "alms to the Church" or zeal in its service. I notice in the *British Catholic Who's Who* an American named C. L. Hearn who was for 10 years Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus.

I do not know whether he has sunk into the grave under the burden of his honors—I find no mention of him in *Who's Who in America* or the *Encyclopedia Americana*—but it seems that he was a Knight of St. Gregory, a Commander with the Star and Grand Cross, a Count of the Papal Court, and a Privy Chamberlain of the Sword and Cape. I do not know whether he had a nice salary to sustain their dignities in a democratic world but I gather that on behalf of the valorous Knights he took some fat checks to Rome. But see an earlier book for these supreme rewards to the faithful laity.

Do not, in fine, lose sight of the fact that the boast that the Church has 20,000,000 or 25,000,000 followers in America is just part of the big bluff of the Black International. No one dare make an actual inquiry, such as was done 30 years ago in London, how many people do in fact attend Catholic churches regularly, which is the only test of membership of the Church. I have shown that 15,000,000 is a generous figure to assign yet that of the living population of America something like double that number have been baptized in the Church. That the vast organization of priests, monks, nuns, journalists, teachers, paid and amateur agents, now the most wealthy religious body in the world, should, with such a scheme of threats and attractions as I have here described, succeed in keeping about one-half of the mass, predominantly at the lowest cultural level of those who by birth and upbringing ought to be Catholics is scarcely a miracle. But the point of chief interest here is that the mechanism for securing loyalty or checking disloyalty is essentially Fascist and illustrates once more that close affinity of the Black International with the corrupt powers that darken the earth.